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woman what *The English Gentleman* does for man; p. 189, note, *for* synonym *read* synonym; p. 193, l. 7, *for* dicuss *read* discuss; p. 243, note, *for* sueggstive *read* suggestive; p. 264, index, *for Guls Hornbook* *read Gull's Hornbook*.

L. N. BROUGHTON.

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TSIMSHIAN MYTHOLOGY. Thirty-first Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, Smithsonian Institute, 1909-1910. By Franz Boas. Washington, 1916.

Important to students of mediaeval literature who are interested in comparing their conclusions with the findings of modern ethnologists is this monograph on Tsimshian mythology, in which Dr. Franz Boas establishes certain principles for the diffusion of story material, by observing what actually happens among a distinct group of North American Indian tribes whose mythology has assumed marked individuality.¹

Among the Tsimshian Indians, together with the neighboring Tlingit and Haida tribes, Northwest Indian culture appears in its most highly developed form. Their material culture centers about the products of sea and stream, about the wild goat on the mountain, and the growth of the red and yellow cedar. The men fish for salmon, olachen, and the killerwhale, or hunt the bear and the mountain-goat; the women gather shellfish or pick berries to dry for the winter food supply. They live in square houses of cedar planks, set facing the sea, in front of which stand carved totem poles, painted in brilliant colors, to represent the animals which appear in their myths. They paint the same animals upon the front doors of their houses, upon dance aprons and skin blankets, or they carve them upon cedar chests and wooden utensils in the elaborate and peculiar style of the Northwest. They also weave mats of cedar-bark and blankets of goats-hair. And to all these objects attaches a ceremonial interest which gives to social life an elaboration constantly reflected in the development of myth.

Among the large number of Tsimshian myths which Dr. Boas records as they are still told within the tribe, many are both interesting in themselves as products of native art, and useful for comparison with primitive ideas reflected in European folklore.

The Raven myth tells of the shaping of the world by a half animal being called "Giant," who flies in a raven mask, and, during his progress about Tsimshian territory, arranges things as they are. He secures daylight from the upper world. He gives short life to man. He makes the little tomtit lord over the animals.

¹ A critical review, by C. M. Barbeau, appeared in the *American Anthropologist*, 1917, p. 548.

He causes the tides. He secures different food-fish for man by contests with various supernatural beings. But in spite of these services to mankind, nowhere do we get the idea of a beneficent culture-hero venerated by his race. He is an example of the Indian trickster, hero of a long series of disconnected adventures in some of which he is ignominiously worsted, in others of which his own ruse deceives a powerful and opulent antagonist whose food-supply he accordingly obtains, but to the last a hero still, about whose person hangs a mysterious charm. "Three years after the white men came into this country," a certain rich man finds his house visited at night by an inquisitive giant, who, in spite of bullets shot into his breast, goes on quietly examining the workmanship of the house. Some days later, a young brave, wandering in the mountains desperate for want of food, follows a trail which comes out upon a deep valley and leads finally to a hut. Within lies "Giant" with his back to the fire, wounded in the chest, but fed upon fat mountain sheep which his pups herd for him in the hills. When the wanderer leaves the valley, happy in the possession of a magic food-producing staff, the hills close about it, and no eye has ever looked upon the valley since.

Similar to the Raven myth in their explanatory character, are a number of animal stories which refer special features of Indian life to mythical beings who are themselves in animal form or are associated with beast helpers. In the "Feast of the Mountain Goats," people are taught kindness to animals and how to treat their bones with proper respect. A goat-song is interpolated, with some delightful transformation magic, all watched by little "Truly black" from his seat behind the tentpost at the dance. Finding himself miraculously transported to a spruce-tree on the summit of a mountain, he escapes by wrapping himself in a goat-skin and pronouncing the magic formulas "On the thumb," and "On the sand," as he leaps from rock to rock down the descent. "The Hunter's Wife who became a Beaver" ascribes the origin of the beaver to the transformation of a woman who finds her husband too engrossed in trapping. "You are no better than a raccoon!" he answers angrily to her reproaches. The taunt strikes home; she dives into the water and, in spite of the man's repentance, little by little assumes animal features and becomes "no better than a racoon." Another transformation story is the Tsimshian deluge myth. In a magic pool called "Lake of the Beginning" appears a whale, who causes the water to overflow. Two brothers are on the bank: one is destroyed by a weasel, the other dives to the bottom of the pool, where he enters a house, while thunder, lightning and hail play without. Animals enter; Thunder-bird, Cuttle-fish, and Living-eyes, who are the elements, transform themselves into a drum, painted with red ochre, and a baton, and are put away in the back of Grizzly-bear, who is changed into a box for the purpose. Provided with these magic

gifts, the boy returns to his brother, whom he restores to life, and who, provided with "a vessel of blood to be his supernatural power," ultimately becomes the food-producing *shaman* for his tribe.

Certain arts, such as gambling or net-making, the Tsimshian ascribe to marriage of a man or a woman with an animal who takes on human form. The animal marriage is in fact the theme of a great many Tsimshian tales. Some of these tales do not vary in plot from those found in other tribes, but they often excel in the grace and vividness of the detail. The brothers who go upon the trail of their sister who has married the bear discover her through her finger prints upon a snowball which she tosses to them from the cliff where she is hidden. The bear-children of the rescued woman, when they see little clouds resting on the hills, cry "There is the smoke of our bear-grandfather!" and the hunters go bear-killing. Others have an ethical motive, like that of the haughty maiden who thinks herself too good to marry. "Wouldn't you like to marry me?" she cries to the snail as she kicks him with her foot; and she weds a handsome young man with skin as smooth as glass, only to find that his parents are the despised snail people and not too friendly to their proud daughter-in-law. So in "The Princess who rejected her Cousin," retributive justice turns the tables upon an arrogant flirt, who is forced herself to become the disconsolate wooer. Again, a man marries two maidens—Robin and the Sawbill Duck. Robin is beloved and Duck despised. In time of famine each brings a present of food from her own family. Robin's heap of berries is received with honor, Duck's canoe-load is ignominiously dumped into the sea, only to reveal too late the rich sea-food with which it was loaded. In another tale, Waux, who can control the shaking mountains by forming an outlet with his spear, once forgets to take with him the magic weapon and in his extremity calls upon his wife to sacrifice to the gods. So strong, however, is her desire to eat the savoury fat of the sacrifice herself that she fails to understand her husband's words; she "repeated her own wish," says the story, and with results disastrous to both.

Many of these stories contain motives familiar to European folk-tale. "Very Dirty" is a hero of the "male-Cinderella" type, who, like Atlas or the Tongan Maui, finally dives under the earth to act as its support. "As soon as Dirty dies the world will come to an end," says the myth. The story of Nalq and the five children miraculously shaped out of mucous, a bit of grindstone, a branch of crabapple, a feather and a shell, is the Indian equivalent of "Hop-o'-my-thumb." The children visit an ogress who keeps her supernatural power in a frog, pass through a crushing cave, and visit the "City in the Air," all by the aid of a magic feather, which, after the rest have perished, one child always survives to wave over the carefully-preserved bones of his brothers and

thus restore them for the next adventure. In "The Hunters," again, nine brothers are killed in an attempted adventure, in which the last succeeds through the interposition of a lady who instructs him how to proceed, and furnishes him with magical objects. In still another tale, "Shining-one of Heaven" courts a proud princess. She mistakes his slave for the true prince, and Shining-One weds her deformed sister. The slave and his wife are transformed into the red and the blue cod for their misconduct; but when the first child is born, Shining-one says, "This is my sister-in-law come back again through my wife," and the mother is comforted for the daughter whom she has lost. The idea of rebirth also occurs in the story of Raven's trick to secure the sun. He assumes the form of a cedar-leaf, is swallowed by the chief's daughter, and being born as her child, makes off with the treasured box which contains the *ma* or daylight. In the tale of the boy who sets out to seek the "living arrow," the incident is developed by means of a ballad-like repetition. The boy as he travels asks one old man after another the road and each sends him forward with the assurance, "O supernatural one, supernatural one! the country that you want to reach is very far away!" As he approaches the village, each informant tells off the actual number of miles. At last he reaches his destination and bears thence in triumph the "living arrow." Next he must learn how to handle it, but one counsellor after another is summoned in vain. One offers to teach him the ways of love, another boasts of the number of his lady-loves; only one old blind man understands the boy's wish, and can teach him how to hold the weapon. His purpose is to avenge his mother against his father's clan, who have abused her. But once started upon his work of vengeance, he becomes insatiable; unless he is slain, he will never himself leave off slaying until he has made an end of the tribe. Again it is only the old blind instructor whose arrow can touch him. They place a weapon in his hand and guide its aim. "Ah! ah! I killed him! I hit his eye!" cries the blind man. As for the arrow, "it went off howling and flew to its home (in the west) saying while it was flying—'Guldana!' "

Still another familiar theme is to be found in a Tsimshian "fairy-mistress" tale. Chief Peace dwells on an island, far out to sea, with a beautiful daughter named Peace-woman. Many young men have sought to marry her, but all have perished in the attempt to find the way thither, save the one youth whose story is here related. This handsome young chief, having gambled away all his property, is insulted by his wife. "You ought to eat the salmon of the daughter of Chief Peace!" she cries angrily. Stung by her taunt, he paddles away to the island, marries the daughter, and brings her home in four living canoes into which food is magically compressed. From this time on, the fairy-woman furnishes the food-supply for the village. She has a magic plume and cup by which she tests her husband's fidelity. He is

at length no longer able to escape the jealousy of his former wife, the water at once runs muddy from the plume, and the fairy woman walks out to sea, followed by her despairing husband, who, in spite of her warning, compels her to look back at him, thus causing his death. He is supernaturally restored to life, and dwells ever after with his fairy wife in the village of Chief Peace.

To these mythical tales are added three legendary accounts of feuds arising in more recent times between rival chiefs or rival tribes. Here the revenge-theme develops without the interposition of magic, but the Indian psychology is, in some incidents, unmistakable. "Good weather is following a hard frost, heavy rains and storm," sings, for her dance-song, the sister of the victorious chief who has slain three brothers in the course of a feud. The mother takes this to promise peace to her only remaining son; when he, too, is treacherously slain, she laments, "My son, the only son left to me, made a mistake, for they said in their song that good weather would follow the dark storm-clouds!"

Throughout these Tsimshian tales, theme and workmanship alike are in keeping with the communal interests out of which, for example, our own balladry developed. The strongest ethical motive appeals, not so much to the moral sense, as to that of retributive justice for the despised, ignored, or insulted—an essentially popular theme, which requires no esoteric teaching for its promulgation. The test of wit is far more dominant than that of character, although this also appears in tragic motives as in the story of Waux, and the tale of the boy who secured the living arrow. It is the objective character of the tales, the charm which lies in the concrete handling of certain incidents, and their closeness, in spite of the world of marvels through which they lead, to such thoughts and feelings as govern real people in the common events of everyday life, which has made these stories live in the imagination of the people among whom they are told.

Of even greater interest than the stories themselves, are those sections of the volume in which are set forth in detail the data upon which Dr. Boas bases his conclusions in regard to the shaping and the transmission of Tsimshian myth. Details of social custom as they occur in the myths are compared with the testimony of trustworthy observers, in order to judge exactly how far the story-teller absorbs the tale into his own background. A close comparison is made with corresponding tales over the whole culture-area of the Northwest coast, in order to see what actually happens to plots and incidents in transmission. To the whole is added an appendix, containing some hitherto unpublished Nootka tales, a summary of comparative data for folklore incidents from all available Indian sources, a list of proper and place-names, and a glossary and index to references. It is to the conclusions based upon these comparisons that the reader will turn with special interest.

The first striking thing about Indian tales is the large part played by animals, and the human capacities attributed to them—those phenomena, in short, which we are accustomed to explain under the general name of totemism without implying in the term anything more specific than a kind of relation felt by primitive people to exist between men and animals or plants. Of special significance for ethnologists, but also interesting to students of literary history, is Dr. Boas's view of the hotly debated questions "What constitutes totemism?" and "What is its origin?"² While accepting the able contributions of Dr. Goldenweiser to the conception of totemism as regards the composite and various character of the "totemic complex," the influence of convergence, as conditioned by the limited possibilities of variation, in bringing about similar totemic phenomena, and the "pattern" theory of their development within the group,³ Dr. Boas denies the psychological unity of the phenomena called totemism. Totemic activities such as taboo, naming crests, dances, legends, and ceremonial, have no genetic relation with each other, hence totemism appears as "an artificial unit, not a natural one."

Totemism is merely the picture of society classified into similar social groups, generally kinship groups, by means of similar social customs, generally relating to animals and plants. This classification is common in primitive society, and not unknown in our own. Common to primitive society, however, is the clan grouping, which, in its nature, invites concrete characterization as a mnemonic device. Indian myth would doubtless play with the idea of animals acting like human beings, even if the clan system never existed; since it does exist, the play goes on associating animal ceremonial with the human group division, and so we have the social complex called totemism.³

In the same way, Dr. Boas clears our conception of what really constitutes mythology, by going to the myth-makers themselves for their terms of thought. From this standpoint, a "myth" is merely a story which refers to a time long past, when the world was not as it is now—to the "once upon a time" of the race. Only, in the minds of primitive people, this period is more clearly defined than in our own fairy-tales. The Tsimshian date most of their myths from the time "after the great deluge," when the

² Dr. Boas discusses these questions more fully in an article, "The Origin of Totemism," *American Anthropologist*, 1917.

³ These theories Dr. Goldenweiser has defined in a series of articles as follows:

"Totemism: an analytical study"—*Journal of American Folklore*, 1910.

"Exogamy and Totemism Defined."—*American Anthropologist*, Vol. XIII. 1911.

"Origin of Totemism"—*American Anthropologist*, Vol. XIV. 1912.

"Principle of Limited Possibilities in the Development of Culture"—*Journal of American Folklore*, 1913.

people had villages at Metlakhatla, whence "all the villages of all the tribes took their beginning." In these days, say the old stories, "human beings made wonderful marriages"; they "used to marry animals, birds, frogs, snails, mice, and so on." Even more marvelous are those tales which relate to the time before the deluge, "when the Tsimshian lived on the upper Skeena river, in Prairie Town." Dr. Boas says: "It should be remembered that in the mind of the Indian it is not the religious, ritualistic, or explanatory character of a tale that makes it a myth, but the fact that it pertains to a period when the world was different from what it is now." Whether it shall be a teleological tale, an allegory, a moral tale, a ghost story, a piece of buffoonery or play of wit, a story of monstrous adventure or a naturalistic account of some local incident, depends upon what particular kind of story happens to please the people who listen. Whatever is of emotional interest to that particular locality will be repeated again and again by successful story-tellers; fresh themes will be run through the same mould, which thus becomes characteristic for that group. That all groups are not pleased by exactly the same kind of thing, brings about an individual art among different peoples, a difference far more strongly marked on the American continent than among Europeans, where the culture is much more uniform, and the mythology, accordingly, approaches more nearly the same pattern.

It is for this reason that the comparatively small area of the Northwest coast yields such important evidence as to the actual manner in which myths are composed. A comparison of the tales found in this area reveals a number of plots based on simple social experiences, and a number of detached incidents by means of which these plots may be elaborated according to the style most popular in any particular area. In one section, for example, the story of the marriage with a supernatural being will develop about the motive of the offended animal, in another, of the helpful animal. The same thing is true of incident. The place of the eating canoe in Tsimshian story is, in the south, taken by a self-moving canoe. The northern story-teller gives the canoe the head of a grizzly bear, or of the supernatural monster called *Was*; the southern, that of a double-headed serpent. The most striking example of such incidental differences occurs in the so-called "Test-theme." Particular tests develop in special areas; parts of the story become elaborated or obscured, as, for example, the revenge taken upon the father-in-law through the very means he has provided for the destruction of the son-in-law, a motive fully developed in the south.

This elaboration of incident is particularly noticeable, says Dr. Boas, in the introduction to a tale, where it is especially necessary to excite enough interest in the hero to carry him through the long series of adventures, generally unrelated, which form the story-complex, and which depend for their number and elaboration

upon the interest thus aroused. Hence the development of a number of stories of supernatural birth, which are handed about from story to story and gain embellishments in the telling. Readers of European romance are immediately reminded of such birth-stories as the child afloat on the sea, or the boy brought up in ignorance of courts in the forest, over whose origins scholars have puzzled themselves in vain. Now Dr. Boas tells us that, among the Indians of the Northwest, such a story is a free incident, part of the common stock, and attachable, with whatever embellishments conform to the feeling for art within the group, to any hero and to any complex of adventures at the discretion of the composer. In other words, although a complex story that has made its way into popular favor is always told in the same order, and with little variation of incident within the same area, it is seldom borrowed as a whole by a different group, but incidents are used in different combinations, and parts may be attached to quite different story-complexes. Even within the same area, the same incident may occur again and again in quite different tales, which develop independently of each other.

This first-hand information about the way in which myth works out among actual primitive people may lay some of the ghosts of recurrent incident which haunt the pages of European epic tale and romance. It is true that the area studied is a highly specialized one. The whole culture of the Northwest coast is individualistic. It is possible that a different culture might exhibit a tendency to borrow a series of incidents more automatically. Another might show more inventiveness than Dr. Boas is inclined to ascribe to the Indian story-teller. We must somehow provide in our reconstruction of the primitive workshop of myth, for the "far-traveled tale" and the after all considerable number of imaginative incidents which serve as primary colors for the shifting spectrum of fancy. But certainly nothing so helpful as this exposition of the way stories arise has been offered for a long time to clear the ground and start the folklorist on the right road towards a critical analysis of his particular problem.

Suggestive also is Dr. Boas's finding that in this Northwest area a marvelous tale tends to sink to a more naturalistic level outside of its own habitat. This fact he substantiates by a large number of instances drawn from the comparative material before him in which, on the borders of the area over which a myth extends, supernatural details are suppressed or given a naturalistic explanation. The borrower dares less than the inventor. The imagination works most freely with native material. What is borrowed passes through the alembic of criticism, is tested by foreign standards of the credible, interpretation being added to fancy. This principle has long been accepted for the retelling of myth under the influence of a superimposed culture, as happened, for example, in Greek or Scandinavian efforts to euhemerize their gods; could

it be employed as here set forth, it might do good service in solving some vexed problems of the probable routes of travel for certain north European myths. At least, it affords us a clearer idea of what must have been taking place in the north during the days of the old sea-rovers.

The final point Dr. Boas emphasizes, as a result of his investigation of Tsimshian myth, is the dependence of the Northwest upon observation of human life rather than upon the interpretation of natural phenomena for the suggestion of its story-plot. It was with Dr. Lowie's admirable study of the so-called Test-theme among North American Indians⁴ that the American School first crossed lances with German ethnologists, who insisted that primitive story-telling was to be interpreted as speculation about the course of nature, especially about the changes of sun and moon, of summer and winter. By a quantitative comparison whose results were beyond dispute, Dr. Lowie proved that only in a few cases was the testing episode coupled with the sun visit; that the two incidents occurred independently in different complex tales; that one bore no internal relation to the other, and hence that the test-theme was not a worn-down allegory interpreting natural phenomena, but a free element attracted, in certain areas where anthropomorphic views of the sun were popular, to the theme of the sun-visit.

Dr. Boas now asserts that "the attempt to interpret mythology as a direct reflex of the contemplation of nature is not sustained by the facts." He finds the primitive mind little imaginative, inclined to play with material at hand and arrange fresh combinations rather than to invent new material. He believes myth dealing with physical phenomena to be the result of applying this material to the phenomena in question, not conditioned by it. The tale has no inherent relation to the explanation offered, but is merely used for elaboration, or the explanation is itself an elaboration of some stock incident. This is proved by the Indian habit of employing for the explanation of an animal-marking a story which in another connection in the same area is told for a quite different purpose, and which has in fact in itself no reason for the teleological application. Explanation of nature through allegory, then, becomes a special style, developed under special conditions until it forms a stimulus for the invention of incident to fit the case, but by no means a universal or even general process of the human mind.

That Dr. Boas is right we are likely to conclude, not only because of the proof from primitive myth, but from the testimony of the great allegories of our own literature, which apply the fresh organic principle of philosophic speculation to old material, relying little, and that less successfully, upon the creation of fresh

⁴ *Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. XXI, 1908, p. 97.

incident. There is every reason to suppose that Spenser, Milton and Dante were in this following the road marked out for them by the human race, and were not merely less "original" than the first speculators who contemplated the heavens and the earth.

The difference lies, not in the method, but in the consistency of the philosophic speculation on the basis of which is elaborated the vast amount of heterogeneous material worked into the allegory—in the fact even that men allegorized at all. For in a primitive epoch there is no reason for supposing that the existence of so called "mythical" elements means that the story as a whole had a speculative significance. Early story-tellers were not so consistent. Even so good a critic as Miss Hull,⁵ detecting in the Cuchullin epic traits attached to the hero which belong specifically to the concept of the sun-god, and details of a bull-fight which are identical with an old Hindu sun-myth (certainly incidents in themselves beyond credit on any naturalistic basis), decides to explain the whole story of the heroic struggle between Ulstermen and men of Connaught over the possession of a brown bull as a contest of the forces of nature. Once committed to the allegoric theory, Miss Hull states her preference, since she must choose, for the contest between summer and winter, although admitting that day and night would serve equally well as protagonists. But if we accept Dr. Boas's testimony, we may conclude that the human plot started the tale, which "rolled up like a snowball," gathering to itself sun-elements among other embellishments, not because a sun-myth started the plot, but because such a view of the story had become a literary convention and was sure of applause. One can imagine the story-teller coming a little jaded to the last scene of the bull-fight. He sees it must be done with spirit, but fails to "see his object as in itself it really is." What more natural than to conclude with an incident whose effective power is well attested by classical example, tremendous enough, too, to furnish a crashing climax, without considering the perturbation created among future critics who are bound to gather those bits of the fallen bull scattered all over Ulster county, and piece them into the perfect image of truth here allegorized in the tale of the Cattle-raid of Cuailgne.

After all, early story-telling does not differ very much from our own. The marvellous happenings of folktale, says Dr. Boas, either express an exaggeration of what is or of what is believed to exist, or a wish of what might be. Would not a careful analysis of the fiction turned out in any one period of our own civilization display more of the traits here attributed to primitive myth-making than we might at first be willing to admit? We should find simple human plots, a hero and a stock of incidents used over and over in fresh combinations to furnish an effect of novelty—

⁵ *The Cuchullin Saga in Irish Literature*. By Eleanor Hull. London, 1898.

humanized in telling afresh the tale of Troy or of Brunhilde, extravagantly fantastic in guessing at those supernatural things hinted at by modern science; and, though often symbolic, yet constructed, not from matter originating in the idea to be symbolized, but out of the old stock of incident, revived by the aesthetic process of idealization.

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SELECTIONS FROM THE OLD ENGLISH BEDE, WITH TEXT AND VOCABULARY ON AN EARLY WEST SAXON BASIS, AND A SKELETON OUTLINE OF OLD ENGLISH ACCIDENCE. By W. J. Sedgefield, Litt.D, Manchester, at the University Press. Longmans, Green & Co. London, New York, Bombay, etc. 1917. Pp. 109.

Professor Sedgefield, of the University of Manchester, already well known for his editions of *Beowulf* and the Old English version of *Boethius*, now offers us a charming little book of selections from the Old English version of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of England*. In view of the attractive form and intrinsic importance of Bede's work it seems strange that hitherto, except for two or three well-worn passages in current readers, the Old English version of the *Ecclesiastical History* has been largely ignored in books intended for college classes. Miller's edition has been at the disposal of scholars for more than a score of years and Schipper's for nearly a decade, but obviously neither edition is adapted to the needs of the beginner, at least in American colleges. The notable fact is, then, that the material in the present book is made accessible to what we may call the general reader of Old English more than a thousand years after the version was first made, and at a time when England once more is fighting for her life. In passing we may remark that this little book is one of a number of notable publications brought out since the beginning of the Great War, showing that although the British Empire is passing through the most trying time in its history scholars have not lost interest in matters of higher culture.

At this time, therefore, we are peculiarly indebted to the editor and the publishers for the book before us, and where we are so grateful we hesitate to find fault. But few books are so good that they cannot be improved, and such is the case in some features of the little volume before us.

The book is of very modest proportions, containing seventy pages of text, a vocabulary of twenty-three pages, and a skeleton outline of Old English accidence in sixteen pages. Doubtless as a result of the stress of the war, the quality of the paper is very poor. It is coarse and will inevitably show the finger marks of the diligent student. Any one attempting an erasure of a word written in